



# Department of Justice

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## REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE REGARDING THE CARTER DEBATE BRIEFING MATERIALS

In June of 1983 the Federal Bureau of Investigation commenced an intensive investigation into how certain briefing materials prepared for President Carter prior to the October 1980 Presidential Debate were obtained by individuals assisting the campaign of Ronald Reagan. This investigation has now been closed by the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. Although every lead has been followed to its conclusion, the investigation has not been able to determine precisely how the briefing materials in question were transmitted. However, the investigation uncovered no credible evidence that the transfer violated any criminal law.

This report sets forth a description of the investigative process, a summary and analysis of the investigative results, and a discussion of the applicable law.

### I. THE INVESTIGATION

In mid June of last year there were reports that briefing books prepared for President Carter were improperly obtained by Reagan aides just prior to the October 28, 1983 presidential debate. In response to both the many questions raised in the press and the President's specific request, on June 29, 1983 the Department requested the FBI to "conduct an appropriate investigation to ascertain how the materials were obtained and by whom."

From June 1983 to February 1984 the FBI, in coordination with the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division, has conducted an investigation into the circumstances of the briefing materials as well as several other related matters that arose during the investigation. Over 220 individuals including President Reagan and many other high officials of both the Carter and Reagan campaign were interviewed one or more times. Approximately one thousand boxes of documents, audio and video tapes were reviewed by the FBI including the Reagan campaign files, videotapes of the Debate preparations and hundreds of other documents relating to facts and circumstances in the investigation. In addition, where appropriate, forensic laboratory examinations of documents were conducted. All FBI interviews have been reviewed by and all documents acquired by the FBI in the course of the investigation have been provided to the House Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Post Office and